Mouse trap
Hume

THE
Mouſe - Trap,
A
POEM.

(Price Six-Pence.)

E. Knight Inv.
M V or Gu

THE Mouse-Trap, A POEM,

Done from the Original *LATIN* IN *Milton's* STILE.

——— *Lusus Animo debet aliquando dari,*
Ad cogitandum melior ut redeat sibi.

Phædr.

LONDON:
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MDCCXV.

THE

Mouſe-Trap.

THE *Britiſh* Mountaineer, who firſt uprear'd
A Mouſe-Trap, and engoal'd the little Thief,
The deadly Wiles, and Fate inextricable,
Rehearſe, my Muſe; and, Oh! thy Preſence deign,
Auxiliar *Phœbus*, mortal Foe to Mice:
(Whence Bards in ancient Lore thee *Smintheus* term'd)
A While, for One of *Cambria*'s num'rous Hills,
Quit thy *Parnaſſus*; from its Heighth look down
Propitious, whilſt mean Argument with Verſe
I deck, indulgent of an humble Muſe.

THE Mouſe, a noxious Animal, enur'd
To Theft voluptuous, long, where Luſt of Prey
Congenial urg'd, had wander'd, and, devoid
Of all Controul, perſu'd the injurious Trade.
From Place to Place he bounded: Ev'ry where
Yawn'd hollow Prints of his unquiet Teeth
Wide-waſting: Ev'ry loaded Diſh proclaim'd
His riotous Gambols, nor was aught untouch'd.
Not Walls, nor Doors, with Barricado ſtrong,
Could or avail againſt him, or exclude
This conſtant, uninvited, rav'nous Gueſt.
If haply he Reſiſtance met with, if no Way
Offer'd Admittance, with keen Jaws he gnaw'd
A Paſſage, and on Cates unbought regal'd.

BUT whilſt this Plagie o'er all the Globe was ſpread,
Deplor'd, yet unreveng'd, her heavieſt Ire
Fate pour'd on *Cambria*, much for Cheeſes fam'd,
Delicious Manufacture! theſe, alas!

Th'infatiate

Th'insatiate Glutton does not slightly taste
Indenting, or but on the Surface coast;
(And thus it fares with Aliment less choice)
But lays the Centre bare with scooping Teeth
Untir'd; the widening Cavity affords
Unequall'd Viands, and a Mansion large.

Rows'd by these Insults, the whole Nation burns
Indignant; Grief and Rage by Turns possess
Each *Cambrian* Breast; full oft abode they shift
Reluctant; up the steepest Hills they climb:
The steepest Hills are unprotecting found,
To Mice accessible; they gnash, they foam:
Such is the *Cambrian* Genius, prone to Wrath,
Daughter of boiling Choler; One would swear
Their very Souls were ting'd with catching Sulphur.

Prompted by Rage, they form a dire Resolve
Irrevocable, that the Plund'rer's Blood,

The

The ſole Equivalent, ſhall, for his Crimes
Enormous anſwer; but ſo ſly a Foe
How to ſurprize, what proper Inſtrument,
Of future Theſts preventive, to employ
Hapleſs they know not; ev'n the vigilant Cat,
Dear to thy Sons, Oh! *Cambria*, wants due Power
To guard their Doors, and mend their piteous Plight
To Mice-admitting Chinks, her ſilent Feet
She bends in vain; in vain ſhe liſt'ning broods
In treach'rous Ambuſh; for th' in-dwelling Mouſe,
Bleſs'd in his Size, if at the chinky Gap
Scouting he chance to 'ſpy his Tabby Foe,
The dark Receſſes of his winding Cell
Of Puſs excluſive, enters; there he lurks
In fierce Diſmay, nor new Excurſions dares,
Miſtruſtful, 'till th' o'er-weary'd Cat's drawn off,
And Peril vaniſh'd with her Furry Pride.

So *Whilom Cambria* (may we not be deem'd
Preſumptuous for the mean Compariſon!)
The Continent's Great Lord, triumphant *Cæſar*,
Eluded, whilſt her Neighbour *Britons* fell.
Of Conqueſt hopeleſs, to Submiſſion deaf,
They ſculk'd in devious Caves, up ſteepy Hills,
To Foreigners impregnable, they clomb,
And *Cæſar*'s Arms unjeoparded defy'd.
Hence all her modern Sons their Vaunts derive,
Extol their tedious, long-breath'd Pedigrees,
Their unſubjected Land, and Tongue antique.

When fell *Grimalkin*'s Claws the ſubtle Mouſe
Had long eſcap'd, and *Cambria*'s tumid Hopes
Abortive prov'd, a ſolemn Council met
Conven'd, on the far-diſtant *Weſtern* Shore
Confining, where her Prelates miniſh'd See,
And ruin'd City, poor *Menevia* wails.
Thither from every Part in Swarms repair

The Nobles, Gentry, and ſulphureous Mob.
Whom with a ſplutt'ring Accent, thus beſpake,
From his hoarſe Throat, an ancient *Cambrian*, grac'
With ſuch a Length of Beard as his own Goats
Oft envy'd; all whoſe Countenance, whoſe Hands
A ſpreading Scurf incruſted. "Open War
" Aſks not our Counſels now, but covert Guile:
" No foreign Hoſt, but a domeſtick Foe,
" A greater, ſorer Ill, this Concourſe caus'd.
" What! ſhall the Mouſe for ever, unreſtrain'd
" Dominion exerciſe and Havock deal?
" Oh! Venerable Fathers, who right dear
" Your Country's Welfare hold, Aid opportune
" Vouchſafe! if our hard-preſſing Miſeries
" Are yet removable, the Deed atchieve
" By ſalutary Counſels; ſo your Fame
" The Land ſhall fill, unknowing of Decay,
" Whilſt *Cambria* glories in *Cadwalader*.

He ſaid, and, waving with uplifted Hands,
Offals of Cheeſe obſcene, with Furrows deep
Entrench'd, dire Monuments of greedy Rage
From Mice inſeparable, murd'rous Wrath
Enkindled: Thirſt of Vengeance, and Deſire
Of Glory, ſeize on All: They meditate
Unheard of Ways of Ruin; ſcarce a Brain,
But with imaginary Mouſe-Traps teems.

At length a Sage ariſing, *Taffy* hight,
For Ingenuity renown'd; whoſe Peer
Cambria ne'er ſaw; Blackſmith and Senator,
Approv'd in each Capacity, thus ſpake;

"If Cheeſe, the Pride and Glory of our Land,
Become a Prey to Mice, the Conſequence
I dread; whole Suppers loſt, will be deplor'd
By meagre Swains; the Gentry will in vain
Wiſh for digeſtive Cheeſe, their Meals to crown.

" But, ſince nor *Cambria*'s Proweſs, nor the Claws
" Of her brute Dearling, can theſe Monſters quell,
" What this Right Hand, what a new ſmall Machin
" And Wiles can do, I'll try: Allowable
" Is either Force or Guile in Foes declar'd.

HIM vaunting, thus th' encircling Crowd behold
With wiſtful Gaze, hoarſe Murmurs all around
Atteſt their gleeful Hopes: But whence the Weal
Expected ſhould ariſe, they much enquire
With barb'rous Diſſonance, they burn to know.

SCRATCHING his Head, for Scratching much avai
The *Welſh*, (if Itch cuticular excite
The grateful Motion or Unfluency
Of Speech) with awkard Grin, he thus proceeds:

" LAST Night, when Sleep with ſoft Oppreſſi
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" M

" My drowzed Senſe and ſooth'd the Toils of Day,
" A Mouſe audacious, in Purſuit, I ween,
" Of unconcocted Cheeſe, whoſe powerful Scent
" In Whiffs perfuming from my Mouth exhal'd
" Attractive, ſtole ſheer thro' the Jaw-ſtretch'd Gulph
" Unnoted, unſuſpected; but eſtſoons,
" Whilſt the Sagacious Epicure explores
" The darkſom Cavern of my Throat, prepar'd
" Thro' my full Cheſt inteſtine Way to gnaw,
" On my late Feaſt luxurioufly regale,
" And in my Bowels cloſe the rich Repaſt;
" I ſtart from Sleep; within my meeting Teeth
" The Gourmandizer, meditating Flight
" Is caught, nor can repaſs the bony Goal.
" Taught hence, that to enthral the wily Mouſe
" Was practicable, ſoon my working Brain
" Well anſwer'd my Deſires; in Miniature
" With wond'rous Speed I fram'd th' unfailing Trap
" Suggeſted by the Prif'ner of my Mouth.

" How

" How wonderful are *Jove*'s eternal Laws;
" Wiſe in themſelves, by Man inexplicable!
" From Cauſes known, what ſtrange Effects proceed
" Uncorreſponding; ev'n the baneful Mouſe
" Brings Safety, and unweetingly inſtructs
" How to remove thoſe Ills his Rapine caus'd.
" Nor need you, Fathers, on its Author's Score,
" The glorious Hint contemn; for ſage Advice
" Should Welcome find, tho' by a Foe pronounc'd.

He ſaid, and left the Place: Th' applauding Crowd
His Train compos'd, and to his Labours wiſh'd
Well-boding Omens, and deſerv'd Succeſs.
Then to his Houſe each blithſom *Cambrian* hying,
His own Embaſſador, the Lares told
From *Taffy*, excellent Artificer,
What Bleſſings were expected; whilſt the Tale
They lengthen'd, and on the conceiv'd Emprize
Cæleſtial Aid implor'd, with wond'rous Glee

Preſaging

Preſaging Cats diſported, and if Fame
Err not; each *Dairy Wife* aghaſt beheld
Her Curds with Sympathetic Motion dance.

TAFFY, mean While, with Head and Hands engag'd
Alternate, aided by *Minerva*'s Art
Divine, a Mouſe-Trap rears: The ſmall Machine
Of Form uncouth in every Breaſt creates
Diff'rent Senſations, Wonder, and Delight.

BUT now, my Muſe, if elſewhere unemploy'd,
The various Beauties of the recent Pile
Diſcover, its conſtituent Parts recount
Inſtructive, and their Symmetry diſplay.

TWO flat thin Boards quadrangularly long,
Compoſe the Roof and Floor; a graceful Row
Of ſtubborn Wires each light-admitting Side
Defend, and all the Superſtructure bear:

Meet

Meet Pillars, for the puny mimick Houſe.
The yawning Portal free Admittance gives
Inſidious, friendly Greeting promiſing
To Mice and Entertainment boon; but Ah!
Aloft, the tickliſh Gate, Portcullice-wiſe
Hangs over-ſhadowing on a feeble Thread,
And threatens hideous Fall: On feeble Threads
All Lives depend, ev'n the ſmall Mouſe's Fate
Gives Motion to the dreary Sifters Wheel.
Faſt in the Centre of the Roof a Beam
Stands perpendicular; its forky Top
A ſmaller One receives, enjointed, plac'd
Athwart, and moveable, whoſe either End,
In Counterpoiſe well ballanc'd hangs; if e'er
External Force ſhould one Extremity
Depreſs, its Oppoſite with equal Speed
Would mount, and upward whirl the Gate annex'd.
Thro' the plain'd Roof a penetrating Wire
Pend'lous it ſelf diſplays; the ſlighteſt Touch

Gives

ives wanton Motion; in a well turn'd *Hook*,
Vith Bait incentive grac'd; it ends below
allacious, whilſt its bending Claw above,
arely retentive of the Beam traverſe,
ne *End* down preſſes, to releaſe it prompt,
oon as th' inveagl'd Nibler dares to taſte.

THIS done, the pointed Hook with fragrant Bait
h'expert Mechanic arms. The fragrant Bait,
ift only alimental, deals around
numerable Deaths: That none may ſcape
is palatable Fate, bewitching Cheeſe
ndures the toaſting Flames, and thence receives
ew Fragrancy and *Fulneſs* of Perfume.

AND now roll'd on the memorable *Night*,
hen *Taffy* from the Bed his jaded *Limbs*
eſtirring, near his Pillow gently fix'd
h' auſpicious Trap, and, ſafe in ſuch a Guard,

Soft *Sleep* indulg'd: Mean Time th'advent'rous Mice
Bolt out, and in the kind Security
Of the ſtill Gloom confiding, ſporting range.
When lo! a well beak'd Chief, of high *Renown*
Amongſt his dun Compeers; but under Stars
Malignant born, the hoſtile Ambuſcade
Approaches, by the grateful Scent allur'd.
He firſt aſſays the Bars; the Bars reſiſt
Inflexible, and ſtop his eager March.
Unbrooking of the foul Repulſe, he runs
Around the ſteely Strength, with wrinkled Noſe,
And hairy Smellers indefatigable
Exploring Entrance, 'till he finds the Gate,
Forbidding all Egreſs, his fatal Wiſh
Enjoys forlorn and jovial eats his Bane.

WAK'D with the Clangor of the falling *Gate*,
Taffy his upper *half* erects; then pleas'd
Springs from his Bed, ſolicitous to know

What luckleſs Gueſt th'unfaithful Dome detains.
Mean Time within the Wretch his Rage diſpends
Ridiculous and fights with Head and Feet;
Now the ſtiff Grates his butting Front repel,
Now try the fruitleſs Labour of his Teeth.
Thus a wild Boar, betray'd into the Toils,
Yells horribly and ſhakes his meſhy Chains,
The *Sport* of Whelps; the well-churn'd Foam bedews
His Shoulders, and his riſing Briſtles ſtare.

(Rout
WITH the next Morning's Dawn, the *Cambrian*
Pour'd down the Hills precipitant; for all,
From *Signs* unerring, learn'd the Invention rare.
The conſcious Aſs put off his native Air
Of Gravity, and of accuſtom'd Sloth
Forgetful, gain'd the craggy Mountain's Height;
Wanton and ſpeedful as a Cliff-bred Goat;
There with hoarſe *Throat* and Mouth diſtorted wide,
The *Cambrian* Cryer imitating, thrice

He bray'd, thrice *Taffy* ſounded and foretold
An univerſal Joy; the roaming Owl
(From hence the *Welſh* Embaſſador yclep'd)
All the long Night, thro' ev'ry Town and Street
Againſt the Windows Wings diſaſt'rous clap'd
And propheſy'd in *Shrieks* the Mouſe's Doom.

THE lab'ring Mountains are full ſoon diſcharg'd
Of Multitudes; a down *Pembrochia*'s Cliffs
And thine *Mervinia*; from old *Bonium*
And *Maridunum*'s Walls grac'd by the Birth
Of *Merlin*, venerable Bard, they ruſh:
Nor lag behind the Tillers of thy Soil,
Fertile *Glamorgan*, nor the Swains who taſte
Fam'd *Vaga*'s *Waters*, nor the *Habitants*
Hard faring of the bleak *Gomerian* Mount.

THEY meet and *Taffy* by the confluent Throng
Environ'd, o'er the captivated Mouſe,

Wri

With ſtern Regard, thus tauntingly inſults.
" Bootleſs are theſe thy Struglings, for thy Fate
" Is fix'd, unalterable; thou ſhalt fall
" My Wrath's firſt Victim; thy deteſted Blood
" This Grunſel ſhall diſtain: Of Flight deſpair
" Shiftleſs; for lo! th'inexorable Gate
" Retreat denies: Prepare then, Caitiff vile,
" For *Puniſhment* well merited; at once
" Bid to thy Priſon and thy Life Farewel.

SCARCE ceas'd theſe Menaces, when from the (Roof
Ill thatch'd, tranſpicuous, where in wonted *Sort*
With far diſtended Legs ſhe much indulg'd
Luxurious Eaſe, the Cat leap'd furious down
All unawares; the dread Rencounter ſmites
The Mouſe with wild Afright; his ſtiff'ning Ears
Advance, his ſhortning *Back* upheav'd aſſumes
A Semicircular *Form*; he ſhuns the *Gate*
Remounted now, and in his new Sojourn

All

All *Hopes* of *Safety* placing, hugs the Bars
With *Feet* tenacious, nor his Gaol would quit.
In vain alas! Superior Force prevails.

AT him ejected fierce Grimalkin flies
Rapacious, gripes her vainly-ſtrugling Prey
With rude Embrace, and cruel Kiſſes gives.
Now, now, the conq'ring Brute elate proclaims
Her Joy momentous; in a thouſand Twirls
Her Tail inceſſant writhes, a thouſand Leaps
Jocund ſhe takes; ſhe now with Body prone
Hangs o'er the Wretch obſervant, with blunt *Paws*
Now pats him harmleſs, counterfeiting Love,
Yet to devour him prompt. O ſavage Breaſt!
With artful Mirth to wound and ſport with Death.

WITH Play malignant ſated, ſhe at length
Confeſſes her whole Fury, whets her Teeth;
And like the Foreſt's Lord with *Hunger* gaunt

Faſtens

aſtens upon her Prey and inly growls
uthleſs; then piece-meal tears the quiv'ring Limbs
nd reaking Entrails. The grim *Spectacle*
harms the ſurveying Rout; the Welkin high
hey vex with loud Acclaim; the loud Acclaim
cho returns, of *Wales* Inhabiter
rpetual. *Brechin* and *Snowdon*'s Sides
nd vaſt *Plinlimmon*'s horrid Cliffs reſound
ulting; ſoon the bellowing Clamour gains
the contiguous Stars, whilſt *Offa*'s Dike
ings with the mad tumultuous Joy below.

THE Scythe of Time ſhall ſpare thy deathleſs (Name
eat *Taffy*! thy Contrivance quaint, the *Welſh*
ll celebrate; in memorable Guiſe
ey chant thy Praiſe with each returning Spring:
y Praiſe and *Cambria*'s Fame employ their Tongues,
hilſt verdant Leeks their od'rous Temples Crown.

FINIS.